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CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES.

PROFESSOR SALMOND AND CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY: A CRITICISM.

DR. SALMOND's recent work on *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, which has already gone through several editions, is at present attracting not a little attention. It will amply repay careful study, and well deserves the praise and the critical appreciation which are being given to it. This perhaps is not so much from any fresh contribution in the way of suggestion as from the completeness and conciseness with which it summarizes up to date what has been already said on every side, and gives, in a markedly calm and fair spirit, a final presentation of what may still be called the tradition of the Protestant church on the subject.

In this note I intend to consider one section only of his argument, namely, his treatment of the doctrine of conditional immortality. Here Salmond seems to me to be not only less conclusive than in other parts of his book, but even inconsistent with the general results of his investigation. In examining this treatment, however, it is impossible to confine ourselves to the chapter of Book VI devoted to this subject, as references to it naturally abound throughout the volume. I shall therefore (1) ask attention to the author's general attitude in his inquiry regarding immortality, and his consequent relation to the doctrine of conditionalism; (2) take up his special account of this doctrine and his objections to it; (3) attempt to meet these objections; and (4) conclude with a counter-criticism and statement.

I.

The volume is divided into six books, of which the first deals with the Gentile and the second with the Jewish doctrines of a future life; the third, fourth, and fifth investigate respectively the teaching of Christ, of the non-Pauline writings of the New Testament, and of the apostle Paul; while the last discusses the theological results as found in present-day theories. Attention is directed to three points: (1) the belief in the reality and varied circumstances of what the author usually calls "an after-existence" or "survival" of the human spirit

after the death of the body, more rarely "a living on" or "life after death;" (2) the belief in moral distinctions as fixing retribution in the future life; and (3) the belief in the perpetuity of such rewards and the immortality *inferred therefrom*.

This inferential attitude on the question of immortality requires notice, as it more or less consciously determines the interpretation of the data of which, with such admirable discrimination and infinite pains, he has given us a digest. That is to say, instead of asking whether the heathen, Jews, or Christ taught, in so many words, the deathlessness or living on forever of men as men, he rather inquires as to their teaching on retribution and its perpetuity, and then argues the endlessness of life from the endlessness of retribution. This attitude necessarily determines his relation to the doctrine of conditional immortality, both as to its content and its treatment of terms. For the endless loss of life which conditionalism sets forth as the fate of the wicked Salmond cannot regard as an endless penalty or as balancing the endless enjoyment of life by the righteous. The content of the doctrine he therefore regards as a denial of the permanency and equality of ethical retribution; and its treatment of terms as an evasion, or rather evacuation, of the language which the Scriptures employ to denote this ethical retribution. This appears incidentally throughout the volume, but with special force in the chapter devoted to the discussion in question, which I cannot but regard as the least discriminating portion of his work.

II.

The chapter in Book VI which treats specially of conditional immortality begins with a very interesting description of the history of the doctrine in the Christian church (pp. 592-6). Of Professor Salmond's attempts to minimize the evidence for its prevalence in the early church I shall speak presently. His accounts of the teaching of the leading advocates of today are able and lucid (pp. 598-607).¹ It need hardly be said that they are given with the utmost fairness, and largely from the authors' own words. On the other hand, it is important to note that the after-discussion shows strangely inadequate comprehension of the points he has himself indicated. This is apparent in the very way in which he proceeds to draw out his array of objections, what he regards in the theory as the virtually unconditional mortality of

¹The references are to the paging in the first edition. In the second edition they will be found two pages on. E.g., the above reference is to pp. 600-609 in the second edition.

man bulking more in his mind than the conditional immortality of a reprieved sinner. From his account we gather the substance of the doctrine of conditional immortality. Under every varied statement lie the common affirmations that immortality or living forever belongs to the righteous only; that righteousness and consequent immortality are obtainable only through Christ's redemption, and those who fail of salvation cannot live forever, however protracted be any admitted survival of the spirit; and that the scriptural terms regarding eternal life and destruction are to be understood in the sense of an actual immortality or non-immortality, rather than in the sense of two eternal lives, in union with God and separation from him, respectively—this union and separation being rather the condition than the content of eternal life and death.

The author's objections to this teaching fall into four classes, drawn respectively from (1) the history of thought and the consent of mankind; (2) the biblical doctrine of man; (3) the conditionalist maltreatment of biblical language; (4) the theological confusion created by the doctrine.

He asserts (pp. 607-11) that history is against the doctrine, since the idea of extinction is a growth only of late civilizations. He refuses any force to the conditionalist distinction between temporary and permanent survival (p. 610).

His second objection is based on the biblical doctrine of man (pp. 611-13). The Bible represents man as made in the image of God, not on a level with the brutes. Even in the Old Testament the after-world is regarded as one of continued existence for all alike, and hence nothing is indicated as to any close of existence (p. 612). The New Testament, instead of developing the doctrine of survival and resurrection to an issue of resurrection *versus* extinction, teaches a general resurrection of the just and of the unjust (p. 613). None of these positions, it is maintained, consist with conditional immortality.

His third objection (pp. 613-21) severely handles what he conceives to be the conditionalist's treatment of the words "life" and "death." Against this treatment he brings four charges: (*a*) He accuses it (p. 613) of ignoring the obvious moral content of the Scripture terms in favor of a narrow literalism, inasmuch as it insists on interpreting "eternal life" and "death" as, respectively, living and not living forever. (*b*) He considers that it ignores the analogy of language both by its apparent denial of any evolutionary growth in the meaning of the words "life" and "death," and by its seeming refusal to allow the

gospel to enrich these terms as it has enriched others. As glaring examples of inadequate treatment he cites (p. 616) Christ's words to Martha on never dying, Christ's definition (so-called) of eternal life as the knowledge of God, and leading Pauline expressions on so-called spiritual death. (*c*) He further charges conditionalists (p. 617) with making admissions as to the presence of a moral or religious force in the terms of "life" and "death" which are inconsistent with that restriction to their elementary meaning which he characterizes as the stronghold of the theory. (*d*) He charges it lastly (pp. 613-21) with an utterly inadequate exposition of the terms, such as "punishment," "destruction," "perishing," "wrath," etc., which Scripture uses in addition to "death" to describe the eternal fate of those who lose "life worthy of the name."

The fourth set of objections is gathered from the theological bearings of the doctrine under discussion. Four of these are considered at length: (*a*) Man is robbed of his dignity in being treated as naturally "perishable;" as "incapable even of continued existence;" as "having in the gift of immortality a foreign element added by the incarnation and redemption to a nature of itself inherently perishable" (621-3). (*b*) The incarnation and work of Christ do not consist with so odd a purpose as immortalizing so inferior a creature as man thus robbed of his dignity appears to be (pp. 623-4). (*c*) The implications of the theory regarding the state between death and the judgment are yet more repellent to the author than its central idea of extinction of life, and may, indeed, be said to constitute the strongest point in his case. He assumes (p. 624), in common with most of his opponents, the general "resurrection of the just and of the unjust" to be a simultaneous and entirely future event, coincident with the last judgment, and then asks why, if the soul outlives the body, we should affirm a survival which is due to nothing inherent in the soul, and a consequently protracted delay in the execution of the lost. Or, if we choose the other alternative, though not put as such by Dr. Salmond, and suppose the soul to die with the body, we have to face the grotesque idea of its temporary death and temporary resurrection to a second decease, with the difficulty of accounting for any principle of identity throughout (p. 623). He further presses (p. 625) the impossibility, under such theories, of proportioning penal suffering to different degrees of demerit, and the consignment to a common doom of death of sinners not equally guilty. These give, it is maintained, a terror and incongruity all its own to the conditionalist doctrine of the intermediate state and

the judgment, an effect which is only aggravated by the assertion of some that it is the introduction of redemption which is chargeable with these strange results (pp. 624-6). (*d*) Dr. Salmon sees no relief in this doctrine from the ordinary conception of the permanent existence of evil, for he holds that on the one hand all arguments against the permanence of evil could be equally urged against its permission (p. 626), a problem which he thinks conditionalism does not specially meet; and that, on the other hand, the ending of sin by the extinction of the sinner is so mechanical an issue (p. 627) as to be unworthy, not only of the dignity of man, but also of the character of God (pp. 626-7). The necessity for the continued life of the sinner is argued by him on the ground of continuous guilt demanding continuous punishment. This he understands to mean continuous suffering, contending that the completion of the penalty would require restoration and life, not the extinction of the sinner, while its incompleteness demands its further progress. He regards evil as having no destructive effect on the essence of the soul, and considers this curious view of the compatibility of eternal sin and eternal life in the same individual as worthier of God and man than the "cowardly" theory of conditionalism.

Thus, according to the author, conditional immortality is opposed to the general consent of mankind, alien to the presuppositions of the Bible, blind to the spirituality of its language, and ridiculous in virtue of its own theological consequences. Can this wretched doctrine of death be delivered from so crushing a condemnation?

III.

In attempting to give these objections the careful answer they deserve, I must set out by indicating the cardinal fallacy which runs through the whole of the author's treatment of this subject. This fallacy lies in assuming that the only alternative to a nature essentially and unalterably immortal is a nature essentially mortal, that is, certain to die, and unalterable except by conditions which would constitute a radical change. The essential point of the conditionalist contention, that the constitution of man may be regarded neither as certain to die nor as certain to live, but as capable by its very nature of either life or death, according to the conditions of its development, seems never to have been grasped. The idea of mutability, unstable equilibrium, and alternative development, far from being foreign to philosophy, is so common, and, today especially, so obtrusive in regard

to various orders of beings, human and infra-human, that it is the more strange that the author should not have apprehended it as being the essential idea of the doctrine he combats. His failure to grasp this is the more strange inasmuch as he has himself given verbal expression to the idea in summarizing the views of his opponents (pp. 602, etc.). The effects of this failure will be seen all through his objections. Thus in his argument from history Salmond takes the conditionalist position as being that man is by nature made to die and only becomes immortal through a superadded quality. The true conditionalist position is that man is made for immortality, but through sin may not attain to it. Such a fate is non-natural. It comes through the fact that evil by its very nature works the destruction of what it attacks. But only along with a deepening sense of sin have men come dimly and slowly to perceive this. Hence the possibility of the author's appeal to history. Men in all ages have rightly preferred to say that all men are immortal to saying that all are mortal. It is a reaction from this which has caused some to assert universal death. Between these extremes lies the truth that man is designed for immortality, but may through sin show himself incapable of realizing his nature.

From the same cause Salmond errs also in his treatment of the argument from the Bible doctrine of man. He is right in representing the Bible as saying that man is "a finite copy of his Maker's nature different in origin and destination from the beasts put under his dominion, made like God and for fellowship with him, the bearer of a free personal life and meant to live" (p. 611). But when he denies that the Bible regards the image of God as lost, he seems to forget that the apostle Paul does speak of that image as being in process of decay (Eph. 4:22), *φθειρόμενον*. The "old man" mentioned in this passage cannot mean sinful tendencies, since these, according to the author's own statement (p. 622), increase in vehemence; these evil tendencies the apostle distinguishes as the cause of decay. It must mean the original constitution of man, which is so far from retaining the divine image that it is condemned as rotten and worthless in the vicarious death of Christ (Rom. 6:6). The divine image is in process of renewal (*ἀνακαινούμενον*) in believers (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:22). The conditionalist notes that man is distinct from the brutes, being made in the image of God, but that he has fallen from his relation to God through sin.

All that is said about natural immortality may be applied to natural righteousness. It is admitted that man has fallen from original righteousness; why not also from original immortality? The one seems to

me to be the consequence of the other. Every argument against conditional immortality may be used against conditional righteousness. Righteousness and immortality are alike the gifts of God in Jesus Christ, but the gift, not of a foreign element, but of that which, in his proper completeness, man was intended to have (pp. 621-2). The author reiterates the assertion of man's superiority as man to the brutes that perish. But in Ps. 49:20 and 2 Peter 2:12 the fate of ungodly men is likened to that of the brutes. That this is not the mere death of the body is shown by the fact that it is attributed to the absence of good understanding—a spiritual cause.

Salmond's argument on the biblical doctrine of man further contends that the Old Testament doctrine of universal existence—why does he not say life?—after death, and the New Testament doctrine of universal resurrection, do not consist with the conditionalist alternative of life and death, or, as he calls it, immortality and extinction, as the destiny of man. Now, observe first, according to the author's own account in Book II of the doctrine of Shéôl, the condition of the dead there was regarded as so lifeless (pp. 199-202) that, in order to show that they are thought of as having any life at all, the author is obliged to cite highly poetical hyperboles, such as the apostrophes of Isa., chap. 14, the figurative character of which he admits. On his own showing, therefore, the Old Testament doctrine of death, though not that of an extinction of being, was tantamount to an extinction of life for all. He himself indicates the progress of revelation as bringing to the righteous a hope of deliverance from this virtual extinction and a faith in a future life through and with the God to whom they were united, and as further suggesting for all men the connection of the future state with the ethical conditions of the present. But when he argues that the resurrection for all men which is the final outcome of revelation does not present the alternative destiny of the conditionalist doctrine, but rather one of life in glory or life in shame, he fails to note that both in the passages cited from Daniel and in the affirmation of the New Testament the resurrection and fate of the wicked, so far from being represented as any kind of life, is contrasted with the resurrection unto "life." His assumption as to the specialized limitations of the words "life" and "death" prevents him from attaching any importance to this indication. What the New Testament perfectly revealed was not the truth of the instinct which taught universal survival, but the truth of the hope of the godly when they looked for deliverance from a fate to which the Jewish Shéôl assigned all alike.

This fate, according to Salmond, though nearer death than life—for it is devoid of consciousness, intelligence, memory, feeling, and volition—has yet in it some elements of life. The faculties may still be galvanized by such events as the arrival of the king of Babylon, or possibly by a summons from the witch of Endor. The author contends that the New Testament develops this idea of some surviving spark of personality in the almost lifeless soul into the glorious teaching of a full and blessed immortality for the righteous, which is, indeed, the case. But why this one-sided development? Is there no development also of the idea of death, prominent in that of Sheôl? This idea, according to Dr. Salmond, is not developed, but completely reversed, and intimation given instead, dimly at the close of the Old Testament, and more explicitly in the New, of revivification for the wicked also, with consciousness and memory, *i. e.*, of a real life in a world of eternal sin, sorrow, and shame. The author would call this a development on parallel lines, but it is certainly not a development at all, but a reversal of the main idea of Sheôl, which he has so ably and fully pictured for us. The conditionalist asserts the development of the idea of death into what Salmond would call extinction of life for those who have forfeited their right to live. The idea of a development of the Old Testament doctrine into the New Testament doctrine of man, instead of conflicting with conditionalism, supports it.

The author's third error lies in his occasionally confusing the terms "life" and "death" with "existence" and "non-existence." The chief blame for his making this mistake lies with some of his opponents, who have rashly used the terms synonymously. "Life" and "death" are ultimate terms, and cannot be analyzed. A rosebush may be dead, and yet in a sense be said to exist; and it is the same with the body. Death does not mean annihilation of substance. The terms have quite different meanings, and should not be confused. The usage of the words "life" and "death" is singularly uniform.² Even in so-called figurative uses, "alive to one's interests," "dead to the world," the terms are not so much figurative as partial; the meaning of the terms is the same, though restricted to certain relations. Unless so defined, the terms should be used as in ordinary speech, and they should be so understood in Scripture. Therefore, to refute existence and annihilation as

²This uniformity appears in the invariability of the contrast. When I say, "My dead friend is still alive," I am not affirming death and life of the same person, as might appear, but I am affirming death of his body only, which is no longer alive, and life of his spirit only, which has never died. Death thus always indicates the total and real loss of that alone of which it is affirmed.

their meaning is not to establish a figurative sense, but simply to leave untouched the ordinary sense of the terms used alike of the body and of the soul according to the context. To prove eternal existence, or to disprove annihilation, is not to prove living forever. And so when Salmond similarly appears to be arguing for the eternal *existence* of the wicked, he is really arguing for their eternal *life*, in verbal contradiction to the Scriptures. This he, in common with the rest of the orthodox party, conceals from himself by supposing that in the phrase "eternal life" the term "life" has a restricted sense, that something is added to the connotation of the term. This supposed richer connotation leads to great disparagement of the idea of mere immortality as the content of the biblical promise of eternal life, in marked contrast with our author's insistence on the greatness of the prerogative as the inalienable right of every man, the denial of which to some would constitute them a different order of being from their neighbors.

Let it be admitted, however, that even this great idea of immortality is surpassed by the more glorious spiritual sense attributed to Scripture by Salmond and the traditional school. Let it be further admitted that instinct will cling to this fuller sense so long as it is contrasted with the other alternative. This, however, only brings out the author's fourth fallacy in not apprehending, and therefore not meeting, the contention of his opponents. This so-called spiritual or theological sense, and the natural or absolute sense of eternal life or death, so far from being alternative, are connected as condition and consequence. All conditionalists will admit that "life" in the phrase "eternal life" has a meaning richer and fuller than merely to live on. It implies communion with God; it carries with it that title, fulness, and fruition that we call pardon, holiness, and happiness—briefly, the divine favor. The threat of death carries with it the ideas of guilt and depravity of which it is the issue, and of the horrors attending that issue. In none of these, however, lies the essence of the threat, but in the loss of life itself. Union with God is not the essence of life, but primarily its cause; separation from him not the essence of death, but its cause or condition. Not reluctantly and inconsistently is this admission made. Rather does the conditionalist eagerly assert that it is only through such fulness, such union, that life can become eternal, everlasting.

To follow the author through all his confused conclusions, deduced from the misleading alternative thus presented, is not possible within present limits. It will be seen, however, that the causal connection

between righteousness and life, between depravity and death, has an important bearing on the argument from a class of reasons adduced by our author, and many others, against this usage. It is urged, *e. g.*, that when the New Testament speaks of "passing from death into life" (John 5: 24), or "being dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2: 1), a figurative sense is clearly present, and that the conditionalist treatment of it as merely anticipative, referring to future life and death, is strained and unnatural. But if we realize that a man who has complied with God's conditions has in effect received that which God has promised upon these conditions, we may truly say that he has passed out of the state which leads to the one into the state which issues in the other. Further, that Christ is affirming in this oft-cited passage (John 5: 24) the great principle of faith in himself as essential to eternal life, rather than emphasizing present time as opposed to future, is clear from the reference to judgment and resurrection which follows.

When once the ethical connection of life with righteousness is allowed, the anticipative sense becomes natural, and the so-called spiritual sense strained. If a few instances of a limited or partial application of the words "life" and "death" are still brought forward, such as "dead to sin," "dead to the law," it must be noted that this limitation is always fully expressed in the context. And thus we must conclude that any such figurative sense is at least so infrequent that it cannot be made a rule for suggesting, much less fixing, such a sense where it is not indicated or necessitated by the context. The Scripture knows no such thing as "spiritual life and spiritual death," its aim being rather to emphasize the spiritual conditions of life and death. When, *e. g.*, Christ was comforting the sorrowful Martha, did he play, even for spiritual purposes, with those words of life and death by which human souls have always expressed their anxieties, longings, and aspirations, and which the author himself uses to describe his own conviction of immortality? Shall we not rather say that, in the light of Christ's words to Martha, "He that believeth on me shall never die," the mortality of a believer is just as impossible as the immortality of an unbeliever? Again, when the evangelist has ascribed creation to the Logos (John 1: 3, 4), by what sudden leap of thought are we to suppose him to add that in him was life in the author's theological sense? On the other hand, what more natural than the progress of thought, which, after ascribing the creation of lifeless substance to the Word, proceeds to describe him as the source of life in the ordinary absolute sense? And when we are further told that "the

life was the light of men," we ascribe also to the Word that distinction between the living creature which does not and the living creature which does possess a knowledge of itself and of its spiritual relation to the living God. Thus does the evangelist account for the origin of matter, of life, and of conscience, as fresh manifestations of the Word, but his "spiritual" term is not "life," but "light." Salmond's controversial use (p. 616) of John 17:3, "This is the life eternal," stands in curious contrast with his examination of the same passage when treating of Johannine doctrine (p. 488), and one cannot but think that his readers would have found his customary careful exegesis more convincing here than mere affirmations unsupported by any evidence drawn from the context of the passages cited.

The author's closing contention in favor of the figurative sense of life is found in the scriptural contrast of life, not only to death, but to terms of a wider denotation. He is quite right in saying that the contrast of life with destruction, wrath, fire, and so forth, implies more than mere life on the one side; but he forgets that every irregular antithesis works both ways, and that the conditionalist has equal right to the force of the contrast. For these terms, as contrasted with life, must include not merely the loss of this "something more," but the entire deprivation of life itself. To understand these terms as an eternal life in conditions which would naturally be its destruction is to vitiate the contrast altogether. Had the same treatment been accorded to the terms "life" and "death" which has been admirably given (p. 620) to the term "eternal," by which its spiritual force is shown, not to be opposed to its natural meaning, but based upon it, the same result would have been attained, and all the misleading false alternatives avoided.

Finally, the fifth error, viz., the endeavor from the eternal duration of retribution to deprive the threat of death of its absolute force, is liable to the same objection of forgetfulness of the contrast. The punishment is indeed eternal, but it consists, not in a blasted life, but in the loss of all life. Proof of the everlastingness of a penalty, or of the agencies by which it is executed, is no proof of the everlastingness of life in that penalty, if the penalty itself be death. It is this last of the professor's confusions which vitiates his attempt to minimize the force of citations from the early Fathers, whom he can undoubtedly show to have taught eternal punishment, but whose other phrases equally indicate that they did not regard punishment as consisting in any life at all, but in its utter extinction. He ought also to

have informed us that writers like Arnobius, whom he acknowledges as a conditionalist, present the dogma when defending it against unbelievers, not as their private speculation within the church, but as the Catholic faith.

Salmond concludes his chapter on conditionalism by urging theological objections. Of these the chief part is drawn from the false alternative which he presents of a necessary mortality or a necessary immortality as the constitution of man. The futility of such objections I have already exposed. It must here be added, in regard to his contention of the inadequacy of the end which conditionalism suggests to be designed in the incarnation and atonement, namely, the securing of immortality for man, that even the author can hardly urge that the securing of so grand a prerogative as immortality to a being whose constitution, so far from being alien to it, demands it, and the purging him from the truly alien element of sin, with its alien result in death, is a conception of Christ's work so very inferior to his own. It is at least excusable to suppose that, without detracting from the glory of man as God designed him, this doctrine adds to the glory of the Redeemer who saved him. It should be noted also that too much is made on both sides of the abstract notion of immortality, as if it were in itself a quality or capacity either originally belonging to human nature on the one side, or to be added to it on the other, instead of being the simple continuation of the life of any living creature. So the scientists of sixty years ago used to speak of heat under the name of "caloric," until it was discovered to be no "imponderable substance," but only a form of motion among already existing atoms. Such permanency, in its relation to any constitution, must depend on the divine will, and this will we know to be, not arbitrary, but always reasonable, expressed in ever freshly discoverable regularities of change, which we call laws of nature, and which make every state in a sense depend on the fulfilment of certain conditions. In a being, then, whose distinctiveness lies in his moral and religious perceptions, why should not attaining to permanency be also conditional, and conditional justly, on the use made of this his distinctive faculty? Is the attainment of this permanency by the fulfilment of the constitutional conditions in the affiliation of the soul to God in Christ so unworthy an end of his incarnation and redemption?

IV.

Having dealt in detail with Dr. Salmond's objections, let me summarize his controversial position. His first great fallacy lies in ignoring the *tertium quid* between necessary death and necessary deathlessness. Connected with this is his second error of never fully facing the question of why any limits should be set to the admitted effects of sin on the constitution of man. His criticisms, drawn from the consent of mankind and the Bible doctrine of man, are met by the exposure of these two fallacies, as also is the greater part of his theological objections. His third mistake is in not perceiving the consequence of confusing his own use of the word "existence" with the popular, non-religious use of the word "life." His fourth great error, like his first, lies in the false choice he offers between what he contends for as the meaning of eternal life, and the meaning for which conditionalists contend. He never seems to perceive the real and inseparable connection between the conditions and the contents of the disputed promise. His fifth confusion is that by which he confines retributive punishment to the idea of conscious suffering, implying life and, therefore, involving a limitation in the meaning of that eternal life with which it is contrasted; instead of following the converse process and grasping the fulness of the penal terms as including the loss of all life. On these three last mistakes his treatment of conditionalist exegesis and part of his theological contention depend.

We also saw that this treatment of conditional immortality arises largely from the author's method of inferring the doctrine of immortality as held by the heathen, by the Jews, or by Christ and his apostles, from the statements they make on retribution, and this obliges him to treat conditional immortality too much as a dogma of future punishment, even when professing to discuss it as a doctrine of immortality. Consequently his theological objections virtually resolve themselves into a declamation against the possibility of such a fate for man as man, whether according to heathen, Jewish, or Christian conceptions of man. His exegetic objections are similarly only a plea for the necessity of a fuller connotation in regard to rewards and punishments than that which he supposes to be allowed by the notion of mere life and death. In all this he is virtually determining his doctrine of immortality by that of future retribution, instead of more logically determining the nature of that retribution by a proper view of the import and conditions of eternal life. Once introduce ordinary clearness of

thought into the argument, and without any over-refinement of simple popular usage, the conditionalist position can speak for itself, and this labored defense of ecclesiastical tradition will need no further refutation. We should, instead of it, find the professor welcoming the doctrine he now opposes, which, far from contradicting, is the necessary supplement to the rest of the conclusions derived from his own data.

Had the author, for instance, observed the uniformity in all languages of the use of the words "life" and "death" as applied to a future state; had he noted his own inability to escape from the employment of these words, except by Latinized synonyms, to express either his own ideas or those of the ancients, he would then surely not have failed to realize that, when Christ and his disciples used on this same subject of a future state the very same words which men in all ages and of every nation have used to express their questions or their convictions, the very same words in which even present-day controversialists express their views without fear of misconstruction, they, too, must be understood to use them (if they are not to mock their hearers) in this popular sense. Why should anyone have no doubt what Salmond means, if he tells us that the spirits even of the wicked must live forever, and can never die, and yet doubt that these expressions are used by Christ in the same sense when he limits the promise of living forever and never dying to those who believe on him? Just suppose for a moment that Christ had intended, without touching metaphysical questions of existence and annihilation, to teach the doctrine of conditional immortality, will the author inform us in what more appropriate language he could have done so than that which he has actually employed? If, further, Salmond, in the spirit so beautifully expressed in his introduction, will allow Christ to speak for himself in this way regarding his own promise of life, difficulty will not long remain in perceiving how this essential promise necessarily carries all the spiritual connotation which he fears to lose; nor will the context at any point fail to make good the rich, full, *conditionalist* exegesis.

Nor, when once the doctrine is fully apprehended, will its bearings at all derange our author's own theology. Nay, the effect will be to confirm and crown the whole. For God is now exhibited as having life for his essence; his love its source, his law its safeguard, his light (of knowledge and purity) the condition of its permanent communication to the creature, and liberty, alike in God and man, its most characteristic exercise. Man is now exhibited as made thus far in

God's image, for sonship and communion with him, but capable of fully realizing that image and sonship only as innocence becomes holiness and a fitness for immortality; capable, on the other hand, of destroying by sin that image, and forfeiting that immortality; and capable, therefore, of redemption by the Son of God, who, becoming true Son of man, fulfils these conditions, undergoes the sentence of death in body and spirit, and in body and spirit is restored after the power of an endless life. He is seen to be capable of receiving by the Holy Ghost that fitness for the immortality secured to him by the Son, and capable likewise of refusing the good tidings of life, thereby justly incurring the final execution of the long-delayed penalty. This penalty, moreover, is seen to be at once declaratory and retributive in its nature, since its essence lies in death, of which suffering may be regarded either as the merciful threat or the appropriating grasp. The old doctrine of eternal sufferings now appears to be, not an exaggerated, but an inadequate representation of retributive justice; and the everlasting penalty of sin and the final extinction of evil, so far from being opposed, are seen to meet in a destruction of evil, not by a mechanical, but by a constitutional and righteous withdrawal of life from the sinner. To crown all, the purpose of God is seen, not as a mere passion for the salvation of an aggregate of individuals (whether some or all of mankind), but as the creation of a final order of beings fit for communion with himself, as with a father—beings infinitely varied in character, yet constituting a common whole. This design, in conclusion, is disclosed as fulfilled through conditions rigidly ethical alike as regards God and as regards man, all of them centering in the person of the everlasting Son. When we shall see all this, shall we say that this doctrine of conditional righteousness, conditional sonship, and conditional immortality is, after all, so poor a piece of literalism? Shall we not, rather, acknowledging that it is the highest expression we have yet found of the theology of the New Testament, forthwith summarize it beyond need of further defense in those little heeded words (*Luke 20:35, 36, R. V.*) originally uttered on this very point: "Those that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from among the dead cannot die any more, but are equal to the angels, for they are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection"?

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